



NEWS RELEASE

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Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety Releases 2014 Workplace Safety Index

10 leading causes of injury result in nearly \$60 billion in total workers compensation costs

Hopkinton, Mass. (January 14, 2015) – The Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety has released its 2014 Workplace Safety Index, which ranks the 10 leading causes of workplace injuries and their associated direct workers compensation costs.

Overexertion ranked first as the leading cause of disabling injury. The category, which includes injuries related to lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, carrying or throwing, cost U.S. businesses \$15.1 billion and accounted for more than one quarter of the top 10 disabling injury causes in 2012, the most recent year for which data are available. All told, the listed injury causes amounted to nearly \$60 billion in total U.S. workers compensation costs or more than \$1 billion dollars a week spent by businesses on disabling injuries.

The Workplace Safety Index is developed annually by Liberty Mutual researchers based on information from the company's workers compensation claims, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and the National Academy of Social Insurance. Using BLS injury event coding, researchers determined which injuries caused an employee to miss six or more days of work and then ranked those events by total workers compensation costs.

10 Leading Causes and Direct Costs of Workplace Injuries in 2012

1. Overexertion	\$15.1B	25.3%
2. Falls on same level	\$9.19B	15.4%
3. Struck by object or equipment	\$5.3B	8.9%
4. Falls to lower level	\$5.12B	8.6%
5. Other exertions or bodily reactions	\$4.27B	7.2%
6. Roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicle	\$3.18B	5.3%
7. Slip or trip without fall	\$2.17B	3.6%
8. Caught in/compressed by equipment or objects	\$2.1B	3.5%
9. Repetitive motions involving micro-tasks	\$1.84B	3.1%
10. Struck against object or equipment	\$1.76B	2.9%

The top five injury causes accounted for 65.4 percent of the total 2012 workplace injury cost burden, based on Liberty Mutual data. The leading “overexertion” category and the two “falls” categories among the top five combined to generate more than 50 percent of the leading causes of disabling workplace injuries.

Liberty Mutual works with its commercial insurance customers to help them mitigate these and other risks of injury in workplaces of all sizes. Using findings from the Research Institute for Safety, the company’s Risk Control Services team developed a wide-variety of tools and services to help lessen the likelihood of the types of injuries listed in the Workplace Safety Index. To reduce overexertion injuries, Liberty Mutual uses ergonomic assessment tools, including a freely-accessible online calculator, to help businesses understand the risks associated with manual handling tasks including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling and carrying.

“When we know the acceptable weights and forces that employees can perform under, we use that information to design safer manual handling jobs,” said Wayne S. Maynard, program director, Risk Control Technical Services. “Potentially thousands of manual handling jobs, from construction and industrial to hospitality and healthcare, are now safer as a result of the use of this and other ergonomic assessment tools developed in partnership with our Research Institute.”

According to Mr. Maynard, the direct costs of workplace slips, trips and fall injuries have continued to rise for more than a decade. Utilizing specialized risk control procedures and programs gives businesses the opportunity to be more proactive in facility design. “For example, using our tribology research – slipperiness assessment tools – our risk control consultants can actually get in on the ground floor and meet with building designers and architects to recommend flooring standards that create safer interior and exterior walking surfaces,” Maynard added.

Liberty Mutual Risk Control Services is comprised of hundreds of certified and credentialed consultants organized with dedicated units for specific lines of business and industries. Specialized resources are offered in Enterprise Risk Management, Crisis Management, Disaster Preparedness and Business Continuity. Consultations are available to all commercial policyholders either onsite, by phone or online. For more information about Liberty Mutual Risk Control Services contact Nick Shah, director, Special Projects at 617-654-3532 or Nick.Shah@LibertyMutual.com.

About Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety

Owned and operated by Liberty Mutual Insurance, the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety (www.libertymutualgroup.com/researchinstitute) is an internationally recognized safety and health research facility. Through laboratory and field-based investigations, the Research Institute seeks to advance scientific, business-relevant knowledge in workplace, built environment, driving safety and disability. Research findings, published in the open, peer reviewed literature, are shared with the worldwide health and safety community and are used to develop recommendations, guidelines, and interventions to help reduce injury and disability.

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